IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. *(currently amended)* A method comprising:

providing an input buffer connected to an input channel and a plurality of output buffers respectively connected to a plurality of output channels connected to a plurality of physical protocol layer devices having the same interface address allocated;,

allocating the same interface address to said plurality of physical protocol layer devices,

storing input data received from said input channel in said input buffer[[;]],

determining whether all of the output buffers have signalized their capability of receiving data,

if not, repeating determining whether all of the output buffers have signalized their capability of receiving data until a corresponding indication of capability of receiving data has been received from all output buffers, and

releasing transmission of said input data from said input buffer to said plurality of output buffers, when all of said plurality of output buffers have signalized their capability of receiving data[[.]], and

deciding, by the physical protocol layer devices themselves, whether the received data belongs to them.

2. *(previously presented)* The method according to claim 1, wherein said input and output buffers are first in first out buffers.

3. *(previously presented)* The method according to claim 2, wherein said plurality of physical protocol layer devices are universal test and operations physical layer for asynchronous transfer mode level 1 compliant.

4. *(previously presented)* The method according to claim 3, wherein said plurality of output channels are connected to a plurality of asynchronous transfer mode devices having the same interface address allocated.

5. *(previously presented)* The method according to claim 4, wherein said input channel is connected to an asynchronous transfer mode device.

6. *(previously presented)* The method according to claim 5, wherein said asynchronous transfer mode device is universal test and operations physical layer for asynchronous transfer mode level 1 or level 2 compliant.

7. *(previously presented)* The method according to claim 6, comprising:

using said output buffers as a plurality of input buffers respectively connected to said plurality of input channels;

using the input buffer as an output buffer connected to said output channel;

storing said received input data in a respective one of said plurality of input buffers; and,

releasing transmission of said input data from said respective one of said plurality of input buffers to said output buffer, when said output buffer is capable of receiving data.

8. *(currently amended)* An apparatus comprising:

an input channel configured to receive input data;

an input buffer configured to store said input data;

a plurality of output buffers configured to receive data from said input buffer respectively connected to a plurality of output channels, wherein said plurality of output channels are connected to a plurality of physical protocol layer devices having the same interface address allocated to each of said plurality of physical protocol layer devices; and

a controller configured to determine whether all of the output buffers have signalized their capability of receiving data, configured to repeat the determination until a corresponding indication of the capability of receiving data has been received from all output buffers, and configured to release a transmission from said input buffer to said

plurality of output buffers, when all of said plurality of output buffers have signalized their capability of receiving data;

wherein each of said plurality of physical protocol layer devices is configured to decide whether the received data belongs to them.

9. *(previously presented)* The apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said input and output buffer means are first in first out buffers.

10. *(previously presented)* The apparatus according to claim 9, wherein said controller is configured to receive a control signal indicating the receiving capability from anyone of said plurality of output buffers, and configured to supply a release signal to said input buffer, when said control signal has been received from all of said plurality of output buffers.

11. *(previously presented)* The apparatus according to claim 10, wherein said input channel is connected to an asynchronous transfer mode device.

12. *(previously presented)* The apparatus according to claim 11, wherein said asynchronous transfer mode device is universal test and operations physical layer for asynchronous transfer mode level 1 or level 2 compliant.

13. *(previously presented)* The apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said plurality of physical protocol layer devices are universal test and operations physical layer for asynchronous transfer mode level 1 compliant.

14. *(previously presented)* The apparatus according to claim 13, wherein said output channels are connected to a plurality of asynchronous transfer mode devices having the same interface address allocated.

15. *(previously presented)* The apparatus according to claim 14, comprising:

said plurality of output channels configured to serve as a plurality of input channels;

said input channel configured to serve as an output channel;

the plurality of output buffers configured to serve as a plurality of input buffers respectively connected to said plurality of input channels, wherein said input data is stored in a respective one of said plurality of input buffers; the input buffer configured to serve as an output buffer connected to said output channel;

the controller configured to release a transmission from said respective one of said plurality of input buffers to said output buffer, when said output buffer is capable of receiving data.

16. *(previously presented)* The method according to claim 1, wherein said plurality of physical protocol layer devices are universal test and operations physical layer for asynchronous transfer mode level 1 compliant.

17. *(previously presented)* The method according to claim 1, wherein said plurality of output channels are connected to a plurality of asynchronous transfer mode devices having the same interface address allocated.

18. *(previously presented)* The method according to claim 1, wherein said input channel is connected to an asynchronous transfer mode device.

19. *(previously presented)* The method according to claim 4, wherein said asynchronous transfer mode device is universal test and operations physical layer for asynchronous transfer mode level 1 or level 2 compliant.

20. *(previously presented)* The method according to claim 1, comprising:

using said output buffers as a plurality of input buffers respectively connected to said plurality of input channels;

using the input buffer as an output buffer connected to said output channel;

storing said received input data in a respective one of said plurality of input buffers; and,

releasing transmission of said input data from said respective one of said plurality of input buffers to said output buffer, when said output buffer is capable of receiving data.

21. *(previously presented)* The apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said controller is configured to receive a control signal indicating the receiving capability from anyone of said plurality of output buffers, and to supply a release signal to said input buffer, when said control signal has been received from all of said plurality of output buffers.

22. *(previously presented)* The apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said input channel is connected to an asynchronous transfer mode device.

23. *(previously presented)* The apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said plurality of physical protocol layer devices are universal test and operations physical layer for asynchronous transfer mode level 1 compliant.

24. *(previously presented)* The apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said output channels are connected to a plurality of asynchronous transfer mode devices having the same interface address allocated.

25. *(previously presented)* The apparatus according to claim 8, comprising:
said plurality of output channels configured to serve as a plurality of input channels;
said input channel configured to serve as an output channel;
the plurality of output buffers configured to serve as a plurality of input buffers respectively connected to said plurality of input channels, wherein said input data is stored in a respective one of said plurality of input buffers; the input buffer configured to serve as an output buffer connected to said output channel;
the controller configured to release a transmission from said respective one of said plurality of input buffers to said output buffer, when said output buffer is capable of receiving data.

26.   (*currently amended*) An apparatus comprising:

means for receiving input data;

means for storing said input data;

means for receiving data from said means for storing said input data respectively connected to means for connecting to physical protocol layer means for having the same interface address allocated to each of said physical protocol layer means;

means for determining whether all of the means for receiving said data from said means for storing said input data have signalized their capability of receiving said data, and for repeating said determining until a corresponding indication of the capability of receiving data has been received from all the means for receiving said data from said means for storing said input data; and

means for releasing a transmission from said means for storing said input data to said means for receiving said data from said means for storing said input data, when all of said means for receiving data from said means for storing said input data have signalized their capability of receiving data;

wherein each of said physical protocol layer means is for deciding whether the received data belongs to them.

27.   (*previously presented*) The apparatus according to claim 26, further comprising:

means for receiving a control signal indicating the receiving capability from anyone of said means for receiving data from said means for storing said input data; and

means for supplying a release signal to said means for storing said input data, when said control signal has been received from all of said means for receiving data from said means for storing said input data.

28.   (*previously presented*) A system comprising:

the apparatus of claim 8; and

at least one asynchronous transfer mode device;

wherein the apparatus of claim 8 is coupled to said at least one asynchronous

transfer mode device.